

## EDITING A MAGAZINE.

## MR. MCCLURE'S VIEWS OF THE METHODS WHICH MAKE FOR SUCCESS.

It does not require more than a few minutes' conversation with S. S. McClure to reveal one of the most potent causes which have contributed to the success of the magazine bearing his name. The man is the embodiment of energy and interest in his work. His personal force looks out from his keen blue eyes, and speaks itself in the rapid, nervous intensity of his words. He talks as he acts, with his whole soul. There is enough mental activity in his makeup to need considerably more than the vitality of one man to keep it supplied with running power, and no one who knew Mr. McClure was surprised when he broke down a few months ago and went to Europe for a long rest. He returned on September 15, and, in speaking of the trip last week to a Tribune representative, said: "It had come to the point when I had either to die or give up work and go away for a while, and I decided on the latter."

"Then you didn't do much while abroad in the way of acquiring new ideas or features for your magazine?"

"Nothing whatever. I went for rest. Besides, new ideas are not got by looking for them, you know. They come of their own accord. The central thought of a great feature comes as an inspiration. Then it grows. That is a very curious thing—the way in which an idea grows in all directions, not only by development from within, but by accretions from every side. A good illustration of this was the 'Life of Lincoln' which we published. At first that was intended to consist of a number of good portraits, on the plan of the 'human document' series which we have published, supplemented by a few articles on Lincoln. A long, connected biography was not thought of, but that is what was gradually developed from the original idea. Why, even when the first instalment of the Lincoln matter was about to be put upon the press, we had a different plan for the later chapters from that which was ultimately evolved. The work grew steadily as it became known to the public. It proved a subject of vital interest to the people of the country, and it practically assured the success of 'McClure's Magazine.' The circulation jumped up one hundred thousand overnight, so to speak. We had something of the same experience with our 'Life of Grant,' but on a smaller scale."

## UNITY OF PURPOSE.

Giving expression to one of his governing theories, Mr. McClure said earnestly:

"A magazine ought to be an entity. It must represent the idea and principles of one man or a group of like-minded men; it must have a single purpose all through. Anybody could make a magazine by hiring a competent staff of assistants, buying a certain amount of historical matter, a certain amount of fiction, of descriptive articles of travel, poetry, etc., and mixing them together in suitable proportions; but it would not be a good magazine, nor would it be likely to be a success, lacking unity, the inspiration and direction from one central head. The pages of a good magazine ought to show a governing idea and a constant watchfulness over all that is important and interesting in current events, so that the articles may set forth the life of the world as it is to-day. It must, therefore, be the duty of some person or group of persons to keep it informed of what goes on, and to draw from the daily news ideas and features for the magazine. The world ages very slowly, and because of this a magazine editor must remain young. His interest must remain as fresh and keen in later years as it was when he began, or he will be out of touch with his readers and the world."

"There is an individuality about each magazine which distinguishes it from all others." For instance, "McClure's" has a field of its own. It recognizes, wherever it finds them, materials which belong within its scope. If it can, it gets them. Occasionally," and Mr. McClure smiled as if in reminiscence, "we find in other magazines articles which we ought to have had; which, from their nature, are clearly ours. Then we feel badly."

"But in speaking of unity, you understand, I don't mean that the features of a magazine should be monotonously alike. There must be diversity, also, for the sake of people's varied interests. Diversity and yet unity—the two can be combined."

"When you started your magazine to compete with so many others long-established and well known did you think there was a new field to be worked, Mr. McClure?"

"I didn't think of that at all. I did it because I wanted to do it. Month after month I had read the different magazines, and said to myself: 'Why did they use that article?' or 'Why didn't they have something else in the place of that one?' and at last I came to feel that I could run a magazine which would at least suit me better than any then published. I thought over it until it became a passion with me. The feeling was much the same as that which gets hold of a boy who wants to be a soldier or a sailor or which inspires a man who is in love or devoted to any one purpose. It was simply that I must have the thing I wanted, and that happened to be a magazine. I felt that I would rather edit a magazine than be President of the United States a hundred thousand times over. So I started 'McClure's' to suit my notion of what a magazine should be."

"Now, the point to be considered is this. The magazine must first suit its editor, and then suit the public. When these two things happen in

conjunction, it is a success. The ideal magazine would be one in which everything, from cover to cover, should be interesting to every class of readers. It is not enough to provide different kinds of articles to suit different tastes. Things must be written so as to be made attractive even to people not ordinarily interested in those subjects. 'Magazining' is the term we use to describe the treatment of a topic to make it just right for magazine use. It is an art in itself. Only the magazine staff knows exactly how an

production. As an illustration of how we use material by almost unknown persons, I can say to you that what is going to be one of our greatest features for next year has been written by a man who never before wrote for a magazine. In fact, his only literary work hitherto has been the publication of one book. But when he offered to us the articles which I refer to, we accepted them on the instant. We saw at once that it was ours. We had never thought of such a thing, but it was exactly the kind of subject

ences and opinions upon the magazine writers of the day Mr. McClure reflected a moment, and then said with emphasis:

"In his field, which is a wide one, I regard Kipling as first—with no second. I am glad to say that we are going to have several of his stories in the coming year. If Robert Louis Stevenson were alive I should rank him as first also—of course, in an entirely different line. I think he has left behind him a most marvelous body of literature, considered in its entirety—poetry, essays, fiction and the rest. That my opinion of Anthony Hope is good it is scarcely necessary to say, since we are about to publish his sequel to 'The Prisoner of Zenda'—'Prince Rupert of Hentzau.' Here Mr. McClure branched off into an enthusiastic account of the new story, giving facts about the plot highly interesting to any one who has read the first book. He did not again revert to the subject of authors, except to repeat his former statement that he was always looking for new men and never paid less attention to a manuscript because it was submitted by an unknown writer."

## A MONUMENT TO STEVENSON.

## SAN FRANCISCO GETTING READY A SPANISH GALLEON IN BRONZE TO HIS MEMORY.

San Francisco, Oct. 2.—The casting this week of the bronze monument to Robert Louis Stevenson has revived interest in the scheme to perpetuate the novelist's memory in a city which appealed strongly to his sense of the picturesque, and which he has sketched vividly in the opening chapters of "The Wrecker." When there was talk over a year ago of putting up a monument to Stevenson in San Francisco, several friends of the dead novelist met and decided that any memorial of him should be artistic and unique, something which should fitly symbolize his life and work. So they settled on a drinking fountain which should be surmounted by a Spanish galleon under full sail, typical of the favorite field of adventure in which Stevenson's genius had free play. When Stevenson spent several weeks in San Francisco before his long voyage in the South Seas in the yacht *Casco*, he loved to wander in old Portsmouth Square, which was the original plaza in early days. There was the first postoffice, and there, too, some stirring scenes were enacted during the reign of the Vigilance Committee. In later days the square has been a resort for waterfront bummers, but nothing can hurt its picturesque quality, as Chinatown shuts it in on two sides, with its wealth of color and its Oriental scorn of regularity and order.

The monument, which was designed by Bruce Porter, a young artist and writer, and Willis Polk, an architect, represents a high-decked Spanish ship-of-war of the sixteenth century, with all sails filled with the trade winds, and with her head set toward the West—the home of adventure in the broad Pacific. Her figurehead is Pallas, and, as she sails toward the setting sun, she is supposed to typify that inexhaustible thirst for adventure which forms the very spirit and essence of Stevenson's works. The ship is five feet high, and has been modelled by George Piper from the artist's designs. It is called the *Bonaventure*. It rests upon a simple granite plinth, which bears the words: "To Robert Louis Stevenson," and below this inscription from the well-beloved "Christmas Sermon":

"To be honest, to be kind, to earn a little, to spend a little less, to keep a few friends, and these without capitulation."

Below the spigot and cup for the wayfaring man who is athirst—and this is a quarter where thirst is very common, but it is usually slaked with something stronger than water—will be a dripstone designed for thirsty dogs. Stevenson when here often commented on the lack of all provision for dogs in the Lotta fountain. It is expected that the monument will be dedicated about October 16. Many friends and admirers of the novelist have aided in gathering funds for it.

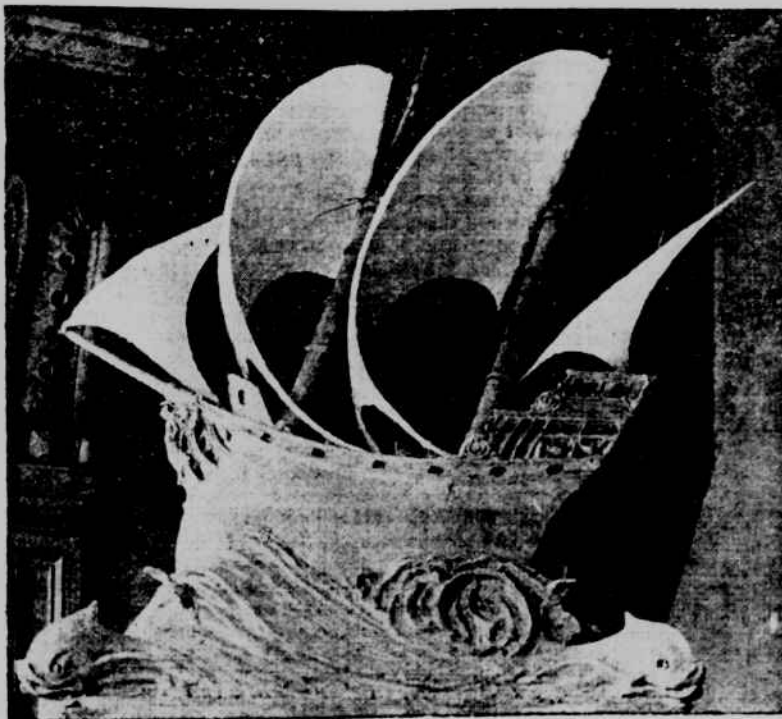
## AUTUMN TINTS.

From The Washington Star.

"Probably not one person in a thousand knows just why leaves change their color in the fall," remarked an eminent botanist the other day to a reporter for "The Star." "The green matter in the tissues of a leaf is composed of two colors, red and blue. When the sap ceases to flow in the autumn the natural growth of the tree is retarded and oxidation of the tissue takes place. Under certain conditions the green of the leaf changes to red; under different aspects, it takes on a yellow or brown hue. The difference in color is due to the difference in combinations of the original constituents of the green tissues, and to the varying condition of climate, exposure and soil. A dry, hot climate produces more brilliant foliage than one that is damp and cool. This is the reason that American autumns are so much more gorgeous than those of England and Scotland."

"There are several things about leaves, however, that even science cannot explain. For instance, why one of two trees growing side by side, of the same age, and having the same exposure, should take on a brilliant red in the fall and the other should turn yellow, or why one branch of a tree should be highly colored and the rest of the tree have only a yellow tint are questions that are as impossible to answer as why one member of a family should be perfectly healthy and another sickly. Maples and oaks have the brightest colors."

"People should be careful not to touch the gorgeous red and yellow autumn leaves or shrubs and climbing plants, which are not known to be harmless. Our two poisonous native plants display the most brilliant autumnal colors of all species in our woods and high-ways. The poisonous sumach resembles a group of young ash trees. The poisonous ivy resembles the harmless woodbine. Its leaves, however, have but three leaflets, while those of the woodbine have five."



THE BONAVENTURE, THE SPANISH SHIP THAT SYMBOLIZES STEVENSON'S WORK  
(To surmount the memorial fountain in Portsmouth Square, San Francisco.)  
(From the plaster model.)

article must be presented to be in line with the general attitude of the publication. That is the reason why I or some of my assistants always collaborate with the author of a great feature, even going so far as to investigate and study his sources of material, so as to get into the very spirit of the work."

## KNOWN AND UNKNOWN WRITERS.

In reply to an inquiry as to whether "McClure's Magazine" made an especial point of securing contributions from noted authors, or

which we should have thought of, and we must have it

"This incident will show you what I mean when I say that the two chief qualifications of the ideal magazine editor are invention and judgment. He must be able to evolve and create new subjects, or, rather, new ways of treating them, and he must also be able to know at once the value of an idea when it is offered to him by somebody else."

"I do not want anybody on my staff who does



SAMUEL S. MCCLURE.  
(President of the S. S. McClure Co.)

whether it was disposed to give unknown writers an equal chance with their more famous brethren, Mr. McClure said:

"We lay no stress upon the name. Good stuff is welcome wherever we find it. I believe it is true that most magazine editors are far less prejudiced in favor of the writer's name than they are popularly supposed to be. We have been very fortunate in securing for our magazine the work of some of the best writers to-day, but it is because of the value of the work itself. The reputation of the men has come from their

not possess these qualities in some degree, or who is not in entire sympathy with the genius of the magazine. The little group of us who are now working together are in perfect accord, and for that reason we accomplish something. I am so anxious for assistants of just the right kind that if I meet anywhere a man or woman who I feel would be an acquisition to the magazine, and who wants to come, I create a place on my staff, whether there is an actual vacancy or not."

When asked to express his personal prefer-